

**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS**

**NASHVILLE DISTRICT**

**Statement of Findings  
and  
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

**Proposed Center Hill Dam Seepage  
Rehabilitation  
Supplement 1**

DeKalb County, Tennessee

1. The US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) has studied alternatives to stop leakage at Center Hill Dam (CEN). This study was conducted under the authority of the Center Hill Project's original authority. The Center Hill project was authorized by the Flood Control Act approved June 28, 1938 (Public No. 761, 75th Congress, 3d session). In July, 2005, an Environmental Assessment (EA), evaluating grouting alternatives to control the seepage, was completed. That EA resulted in a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) signed on July 17, 2005. The preferred alternative as listed in that EA and FONSI is to inject grout in a grout line on both the right and left sides of the dam. During the design of the grouting alternative, a more effective remediation treatment was identified. Therefore a Supplemental EA was prepared. There were two action alternatives and a No-Action alternative considered in that supplement. No-Action, Grouting, and Grouting and Cut-off Walls were evaluated throughout the EA.

*Alternative 1, No Action* would mean that all current operations would continue and no construction or rehabilitation would take place.

*Alternative 2, Grouting* would consist of forcing grout into the ground to fill voids and form an impenetrable wall below the surface.

*Alternative 3, Grouting and Cut-off Walls* would consist of everything in Alternative 2 plus cut-off walls would be constructed along the earthen embankment and across the fuse-plug (saddle dam). Cofferdams would be temporarily placed adjacently upstream to the saddle dam for safety

reasons. Disposal material would be placed in areas that were previously used for disposal during the construction of the dams or to fill existing sink holes. A work platform approximately 1 acre in size would be required for construction. The Preferred alternative is alternative 3, Grouting and Cut-off Walls.

2. The EA was prepared following the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council for Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR, 1500-1517), and Corps of Engineers Regulations ER 200-2-2 *Policy and Procedures for Implementing NEPA* (33 CFR, 230). The EA was prepared to describe existing conditions and evaluate potential impacts associated with the proposed action and No Action alternative.

3. The EA does not reveal significant impacts resulting from the recommended action. There would be some minimal long-term loss of vegetation from widening existing haul roads. Forested habitat would be temporarily lost within the footprints of disposal areas. Once construction is complete the areas would be allowed to re-forest. Typical construction impacts (sedimentation, noise, air quality, etc.) would be reduced by use of appropriate best management practices. Possible impacts to the state-listed species, Harper's Umbrella-plant (*Eriogonium longifolium* var. *harperi*), would be avoided by placing exclusion cages around individual plants. Some individuals in the direct path of construction would be lost. The Corps will coordinate with the Tennessee Department of Natural Heritage to locate individual plants.

4. On February 10, 2006, a scoping letter describing the proposal was sent to members of the public and to agencies with jurisdiction by law or special expertise. Comments were received in reference to the following: underground storage tanks, historic properties, and tailwater minimum flows. These issues are addressed in the EA.

5. Pursuant to the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (FWCA) of 1958, and Endangered Species Act, coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA), and the Tennessee Division of Heritage was conducted. In a letter dating May 18, 2004, the USFWS stated that the Price's potato bean (*Apios priceana*) and the gray bat (*Myotis grisescens*) may be located within the area of potential effect. USFWS also

requested that Biological Assessments (BA) be prepared for the two species. According to a phone conversation on February 7, 2005 with the USFWS, Price's Potato Bean is most likely not located within the area of potential effect. Also in a March 10, 2006 conversation, USFWS agreed to review the EA and unsigned FONSI. Comments received from TWRA, stated that the seepage flows were essential and recommended that mitigation for potential impacts to the existing valuable trout fishery due to the loss of these in-stream flows should be included in the NEPA process. These concerns have been addressed in the EA. No comments were received from the Division of Heritage.

6. Public Notice No. PM-P-06-01 describing the proposed work for the purpose of compliance with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act is being circulated. State 401 Water Quality Certification is being requested.

7. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 requires each Federal agency take into account the effects of its undertakings on historic properties included in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. According to the February 15, 2006, letter from the Tennessee Historical Commission, the proposed project will not adversely affect any property that is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The State Historic Preservation Officer therefore has no objection to the implementation of the project.

8. Chapter 6, Environmental Commitments and Compliance, of the EA discusses the status of permits and environmental compliance. The preferred alternative is in compliance with Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management). There are no wetlands within the project area. Finally, the proposal is in compliance with Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice. In order to mitigate for flow lost to stopping the seepage, a new "house unit" turbine will replace the existing house unit. This new turbine will be able to produce the 200 cfs required flow identified in a recent Corps Study. There are no unresolved issues.

9. I have reviewed the report, public and agency comments, and the EA for the Center Hill Seepage Study in DeKalb County, Tennessee. In light of the general public interest, I have determined that the preferred alternative,

Alternative 2, grouting, would not constitute a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended. Accordingly, I have concluded that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. Furthermore, having weighed the potential benefits that may be accrued as a result of implementing the recommended plan against the reasonable foreseeable detrimental effects, I conclude that placing fill within the Center Hill Reservoir in order to construct a work pad, to complete construction of the Center Hill Seepage Rehabilitation Project, as proposed, is in the public interest.

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Date

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Steven J. Roemhildt, P.E.  
Lieutenant Colonel  
Corps of Engineers  
District Engineer